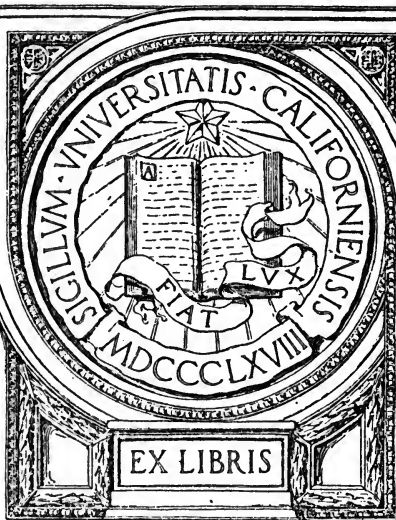


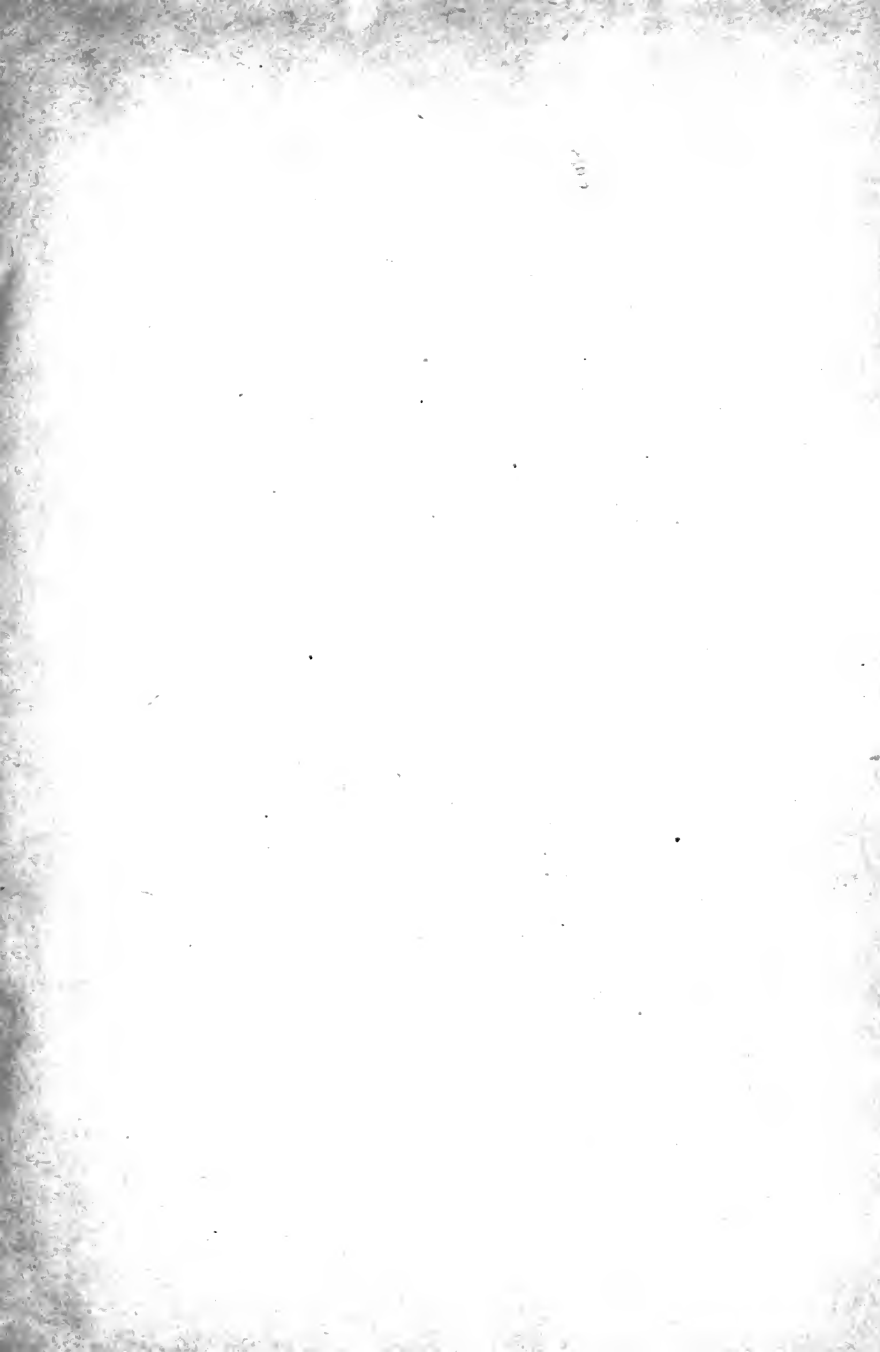
NOGI

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NOGI

TO VIND
AMBROLIO



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NOGI:

A GREAT MAN AGAINST
A BACKGROUND OF WAR

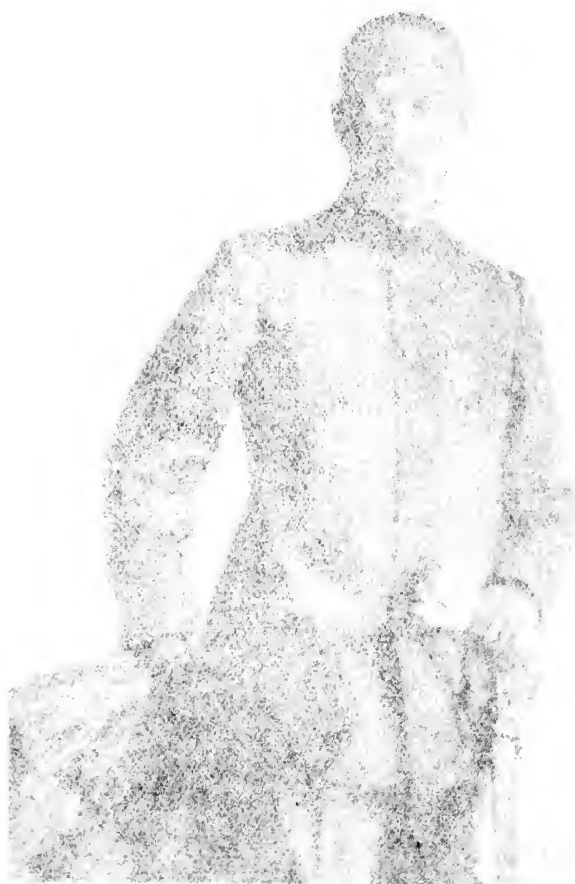
By

STANLEY WASHBURN

LONDON: ANDREW MELROSE

14, ST. MARTIN'S STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

1913



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NOGI

CHAPTER I

TO the world at large and to Japan especially, Nogi has been known and admired as the general who captured Port Arthur and turned the Russian right at Moukden, thereby ending that terrific battle in the rout of Kuropatkin. To the student of military matters Nogi and his deeds constitute a chapter in the science and the art of war. To Japan the man has now become more than a mere national hero ; he is already a tradition which promises to live in Japanese history long after the details of his achievements have grown to be vague and indistinct memories in the public mind. And this will happen, not

merely because Nogi so mourned his Emperor that he elected to kill himself, but because in this single act of devotion was emphasized the habit of mind of a lifetime of self-effacement and of impersonal striving for the realization of an ideal.

Nogi's life exemplified that curious, subtle, half-defined instinct, which is so definite and potent an influence in the Japanese character—the tendency to merge the personal in the ideal. He was the consistent embodiment of that idea of the Buddhist religion which leads each soul to pray for ultimate absorption into Nirvana, the intangible Divine. Nogi, in his personal character and in his whole life, was the exemplification of this idea, and his death was a vindication of it, for all the nation to see and realize. A few old men, such as Nogi, Oyama, Ito and their contemporaries, made modern Japan possible. With ideals unsmirched by personal ambitions, they were able to combine the human assets of the almost Spartan manhood of the Japanese, its simplicity, and semi-fanatical worship of National ideals, reaching back to

feudal times, with all of the arts and sciences of the modern western world. This combination of most of the best elements of two different civilizations was hard to surpass.

The army, for example, represented the union of all the simple characteristics, which made the ancient Greeks invincible, with the knowledge of the very latest practice and equipment in the art of war.

Inasmuch as Nogi, both in his life and in his death, stands now and will probably always stand for the peculiar type of man that made the greatness of New Japan possible, it has seemed worth while to write this sketch. It is not my aim to attempt, even in the briefest way, a biography of Nogi. Much less is it my desire to write what might be viewed as a tentative contribution to military history. What I wish to do is to paint, as best I may, the picture of a man against the background of a war. To know and appreciate Nogi and to realize the workings of his mind and character (if indeed one may ever even attempt to know the true mind or

character of a Japanese), one must dwell at least briefly on the Great war. I shall not speak of the General's youth, his life as a young man, his record in the Chinese war, nor, in fact, of anything prior to 1904, for of these matters I know only what other writers and wiser historians have told. Of Nogi in the great struggle I know somewhat, for it was my privilege to be attached to his staff as war correspondent for an American paper, both at Port Arthur and later in the North when his Army had moved to the Mongolian frontier on the extreme Japanese left.

What I knew and saw of Nogi inspired in me the most intense admiration for his character and for his genius. He represents the most consistent idealist I ever knew. That he was a great soldier, the world knows. His private and personal side, that sweet and simple gentleness, that winning kindliness which, in its appeals equalled the tenderness of a woman, is, I believe little known in England or America, and is appreciated not at all. To know the man one must have seen him in both

aspects, as the iron soldier and as the gentle friend. In both these rôles a few of us knew him. If I dwell a little upon Port Arthur and Manchuria, it is not because of them, but because it was through and on account of them that I came to know the General. To Nogi, Port Arthur was a scar, and Moukden a wound re-opened. In the war we trace the development of his character, and in the pathos and tragedy of those cruel days of blood and sacrifice we learn to understand the workings of the mind that prompted General Nogi to act as he did when his Imperial Master died.

CHAPTER II

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WHEN the grand plan of the campaign against Russia was mapped out in the War Office in Tokio years before the struggle, the prospective military operations were divided into two great parts, Port Arthur and the movements in Korea and Northern Manchuria. The latter formed in reality but one campaign, for though the programme was launched in two parts, the strategy matured at Lio Yang at a single stroke. Port Arthur itself represented to the Japanese a galling wound that rankled deeply in their national pride. They had taken it from the Chinese in a short and exhausting campaign in 1894, and then they beheld the fruits of their victory swallowed up by Russian intrigue almost before the smoke of battle had fairly cleared away. From the time, a

few years later, that the Muscovite entered Port Arthur, "temporarily" as it was at first given out, the Russo-Japanese war was an inevitable conflict. For almost a decade the Japanese were straining every nerve in preparation for the war that was to wipe out the chagrin they had felt when Russia stepped in and, without a blow, appropriated to herself the prize of 1895.

To the military experts in Tokio, planning and organizing and burning the midnight oil, it was well known that the capture of Port Arthur presented immense difficulties. Their army of spies sown throughout Manchuria took good care to keep them posted as to what the hated Russians were doing on the tip of the Lio Tung Peninsula. Next to Gibraltar, Port Arthur represented to the Japanese the most impregnable fortress that the busy hands of men ever threw up against a sky-line to block an attacking foe. This they knew long before they tried to solve the problem which the best engineers of Europe had declared to be a riddle, with no other answer than

death and defeat to the foe that presumed to storm the grisly heights. Every detail of the plan of investment and attack, it is said, was completed several years before the war. At the same time the leader was selected, to whose hands should be entrusted the vindication of the National honour involved in the retaking of Port Arthur.

The man was Nogi.

The task to which he was assigned has no parallel in modern history. For many, many months before the struggle he had been aware of what was in store for him. He had himself commanded a brigade in 1894, when the fortress was taken from the Chinese, and none knew better than he the difficulties, now increased a hundred-fold by new defences, that awaited him in Manchuria. When he left Japan to take upon his shoulders the burden of the great responsibility that had been assigned to him, his own life and personal interests were shed from him as one might drop a cloak.

Nearly eighteen months after he had

left Japan, I took an unusually fine picture of the old man, mounted on the great white horse that his prisoner Stoessel had presented to him when Port Arthur finally fell. As the likeness was the best that I had seen, I sent the film back to my agent in Japan and instructed him to have it enlarged, coloured, framed and presented to the Baroness Nogi, who was at that time living simply in her little house in Tokio. When she saw the picture she held it at arms' length and as the tears—so hardly wrung from the Japanese—stole down her cheeks, she said, "This is the first direct personal touch that has come from my dear husband since the war started. When he parted with me to go to the 'front' months and months ago, he said that as a husband he would be dead to me until the war was successfully terminated, and that I would not hear from him before then, nor should I write him, for his life, his time, his thoughts belonged utterly to his sovereign and to his country; that there must be naught of personality to come between. He has

kept his word, for with the exception of an occasional note asking for spurs, or new equipment, I have heard nothing."

This, then, was the spirit that Nogi took with him to the "front" when he went to solve the riddle that had been laid before him as his portion. And even before the leader landed on the barren coast that was to mean so much misery to him, word was brought that one of his two sons, both young officers in the army, had died on the Hills of Nan-Shan pierced by a Russian bullet. Thus was the bitterness of his task emphasized even at its inception.

The Japanese conception of Port Arthur as a military problem has always seemed to me a cruel fallacy, an error in analysis, which cost the lives of tens of thousands of young men, and broke the heart of the iron old warrior to whom its execution was entrusted. It seems worth while to dwell a little on this, not as an attempt to contribute anything to the military history of that bloody siege, but rather because it explains, in a measure, the hideous burden that came to weigh more

and more heavily upon Nogi himself. Any commander sensible of responsibility, and of the gravity of decisions which rush regiments of lives to destruction, must mourn the losses which the execution of his commands entails. But war breeds a perspective wherein men justify sacrifices which bring success. It is the loss of life which follows an unsound plan, based on an erroneous estimate of the problem to be solved, that rends the heart of the man who gives the order, and there can be but faint consolation to the leader, in the fact that he, like Nogi, was but the instrument in the execution of a programme which the War-Office staff at home had worked out.

For ten years prior to the Japanese-Russian war, military writers, dwelling on the increased destructiveness of modern implements of war, had declared that the use of the bayonet and fighting at close ranges would be impossible. A Russian gentleman named Bloch, in the later 90's, wrote a book in six volumes in which he proved that war was an impossibility from the point of view both of economics

and of destructiveness. So convincing was his *Future of War*, as the work was called, that Mr. Bloch was awarded the Nobel prize and was credited with having inspired the Czar to call the first Peace Congress at the Hague. The Japanese, however, had not forgotten the manner in which they, in a single day, took Port Arthur from the Chinese in 1894. Then, with the bayonet and in a series of spectacular assaults, they captured the pivotal fort, and the great fortress fell like a house of cards. In 1904 they faced the Russians on the same ground, though the defences had been rebuilt almost throughout, under the direction of the world's cleverest engineers.

The plan worked out by the Japanese was based on the century-old theory that men were superior to modern methods, and that, as always before, "cold steel" could surmount any obstacles which engineers might have reared to block an assaulting enemy's progress. The first act of the Port Arthur campaign on the heights of Nan-Shan should have taught the Japan-

ese their error. Here, across a narrow neck of land, the Russians had built effective field fortifications. And here the Japanese should have learned their lesson. The first day, they made their assault in great strength and over a narrow area, and they lost about three thousand men in as many hours, among them Nogi's eldest son. Nothing daunted, they repeated their effort the second day, met but a feeble resistance and carried the works. In the eyes of the officers commanding the army their theory that the Japanese bayonets were irresistible had been vindicated.

But one vital point was overlooked. During the night following the first assault, a number of shallow-draft gunboats of the Japanese navy had quietly steamed within range, and, while the columns of infantry were assaulting in front, the naval shells were bursting steadily on the Russian flank and rear. The position was untenable, and when the Japanese infantry came on later in the day, the Russians withdrew. Here, then, grew up the fallacy which caused the tragedy at Port Arthur.

The naval officers mildly intimated that their co-operation had made the second assault on Nan-Shan possible, but the Army scoffed at the idea. To them it was all due to their own impetuous assaults. The assistance of the Navy was but a detail. Thus it was that Nogi and his splendid army arrived at last before Port Arthur itself with the idea of "cold steel" unshaken in their minds.

I never knew any one, Japanese or white, who pretended to know what Nogi really thought about Port Arthur. What he did we all know. Under the conventional fire of his artillery he ordered an assault with the bayonet on the line of forts which stood bleak and forbidding against the sky. To make this assault his infantry had to move, practically without protection, across an open valley. The distance was perhaps a mile and a half on the average. This was the plan which he had been ordered to execute, and without a tremor his men attempted the impossible. For nearly a week, both by day and by night, his battalions, regiments and brigades dashed

themselves in hopeless effort against the impenetrable fortifications. Machine guns, shrapnel, shell and volleys of rifle-fire swept them down in droves, but again and again they came on and on and on. One battalion was reduced in a day from 1,200 to seventeen effectives and one officer. In their minds the idea of ultimate victory through one method had been implanted at Port Arthur ten years before, and had been strengthened at Nan-Shan a few weeks earlier, and they would not accept the inevitable. In all that hideous week there was neither hesitation nor faltering among men or among officers. No one knows what they lost. Certainly 25,000 fell and perhaps 40,000. The net result was the occupation at the end of the week of one position, and even that not one which possessed great strategic value.

This, then, was the first great burden that fell upon Nogi. He had put to the test the programme which he had been ordered to execute. A bleeding and shattered army—with utter disillusionment as to Port Arthur—was the result. For weeks

before tickets had been sold in Yokohama and Tokio for a grand entertainment to celebrate the fall of Port Arthur. Certain signals had been widely advertised whereby the Japanese people might be informed of the great event, the date of which had actually been announced. It reminded one not a little of the arrangements made by some of our great dailies to announce election returns. But after the failure of the August attacks, the tickets were called in, decorations were taken down, and a sobered Japan settled down, dazed and stunned, but not dismayed, to await the further developments of the siege.

CHAPTER III

NOGI all this time was living quietly in a little hut of mud and stone from which Chinese, pigs, chickens and the miscellany which composes a Manchurian family had been turned out. The little village of a score or more of similar houses was well within the range of the Russian guns, and might have been annihilated if the enemy had but known it. Many and many a time their big shells burst fully a mile in the rear of the commander's dwelling-place, and once a big ten-inch shell fell within a few hundred yards of the house itself, spattering men and horses about like fragments of a shattered egg.

To us Nogi seemed always the same in those days. A quiet, self-contained man,

a little large perhaps for a Japanese, with close-shaven head and a dark beard, which grizzled perceptibly during those days of blood and chaos. Long years of campaigning with his troops, and of out-of-door life, had turned his skin to a dark brown parchment. The eyes were deep-set, unfathomable, and as variable in their expression as is the range of the human emotions. When he talked to us, they were mild, polite, and non-committal. When he gave orders to his staff or to his orderlies, the pupils would contract to mere points of steel, and the whole aspect of his face would suggest the soldier, the mere machine of war, without personality or emotions. The next moment he might turn to us with a change as complete as that from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde, and in his well-modulated voice, and with the mild politeness and formality of a host, he would resume the commonplaces of the conversation in which he had been engaged.

At Port Arthur we saw little of his gentle, kindly, almost paternal side, the side we came to know so well the following year

in Northern Manchuria. Night and day at Port Arthur his mind was on the great problem that lay before him, which every effort to solve seemed only to result in dead, dying and mangled bodies. Of the losses I never heard him speak at Port Arthur, but that the daily roll of killed and wounded that came to him each morning cut him deeper and deeper, none could doubt. During those dreadful days which dragged along, week after week, month after month, he changed greatly. Heavy furrows of care and worry seamed his face, and when it was in repose deep new lines stood revealed like scars.

Many of the Japanese, especially of the younger school, felt but a modicum of sympathy for the dead and the wounded. With Nogi I think it was quite different. As a young general he had organized the Ninth Division, and it was said that he knew by name every officer in its ranks. That division was the child which he himself had raised and for many years had commanded. It formed the centre of his army at Port Arthur and saw perhaps the

hardest and bitterest fighting of any division in the entire war. I was told by one of its officers that it was recruited during the war two and one-half times, while of the officers of the line there were hardly a dozen who served through the campaign from end to end. Every time there was hard fighting, the Ninth submitted almost without exception the largest list of casualties, and in every such list that Nogi read were the names of friends whom he, as a commander, had trained and disciplined to their appointed task.

To the man who felt the loss of each soldier as a personal bereavement the Port Arthur campaign brought bitterness beyond description. During that week of the first great assault in August, Nogi was ever at the "front," stationed now on one hill and now on another, watching his battalions, regiments and brigades dissolving before the Russian fire like mist before the sunshine. Yet day after day he kept them at it. The plan was not his, but he assumed the responsibility of it, and with a stoicism that a thousand

years in history past cannot duplicate, he fed the cavernous maw of war with the best manhood of Japan.

And the soldiers themselves, they that were called upon to give and give freely, accepted their lot with the same stoicism as did he who sent them to their doom. Never, I think, did any of them, in word or thought, question the commands of the silent man by whose orders they offered their lives on the altar of their duty and of their nation. Between Nogi and his men there seemed to be, on their part, a curious blending of love, respect and reverence which engendered a willingness to go to the last gasp with an eagerness that bordered on fanaticism. When he passed, each and every soldier would grow rigid with respectful attention, only their eyes, which followed him as a dog its master, distinguishing them from graven statues. When he went abroad with his staff there seemed always an aloofness between him and them. He walked in advance, not consciously, I think, but because his officers fell back as from a

man marked as above and different from them. When they spoke among themselves, it was in modulated voices, as people speak in a sick-room or in the presence of death.

Again and again have I seen him in the morning leave his little mud headquarters to ride to the front for the inspection of some new phase of the progress of the siege, and always, as my mind brings back the image, the picture is the same. With him there was little of the pomp and ostentation of military trappings that distinguish soldiers of high rank in foreign armies. His dress never varied ; high cavalry boots over white moleskin trousers, that grew greyer and greyer as the siege advanced, and a dark blue tunic, almost black, with the three stars and three stripes on the sleeves that denoted his rank. He would come walking slowly from his house, seemingly lost in thought, with spurs ringing metallicly on the stone flagging, and sabre dragging clamorously at his side. A pace or two behind followed his quiet and subdued aides. At the wooden-

lintelled outer gate of the compound, the sentry stood with rifle presented, as motionless as though cast from steel, while silently and slowly the General mounted his horse and rode off down the road that led to the front.

Once in a great while he would invite the correspondents to take tea or refreshments at his headquarters, and there occasionally, in the late fall afternoons we would find him, sitting under a tree at the head of a rough table, with maps spread out before him. These he would study through a great lens that magnified the details of the finely-traced terrain on which the great puzzle was being worked out to the roar of a thousand guns and the sobbing groans of dying men. Inch by inch he would move the lens across the map, halting occasionally for minutes at a time, as he scrutinized every detail of some new trench captured or redoubt to be stormed. But always when we appeared, the intensity, and the anguish of worry over success belated, and victory long overdue, would fade from his face,

and he would greet us as casually as he might have done had the reception been one planned to take place in his own home in Tokio. At a crisp word to an orderly, the maps would disappear and tea, or saki (the Japanese drink, something like sherry in taste) would be brought in, and then for perhaps half an hour he would chat as unconcernedly as though there were not behind that iron mask the plan for an assault on the morrow that would cost untold lives to those even now crouching for the spring up yonder in the trenches.

To his men and to officers he was always kind and conciliatory, but never under any circumstances familiar. When he spoke to them, he spoke curtly, and they acted instantly. A moment's delay on their part, and one sharp look, like the flash of a smouldering flame, would bring them to their feet in an instant with blood surging up beneath their skins. I never knew or saw a man whose eyes could in their glance, speak death one instant, and the next second be as placid and non-committal as those of one who had no thought on

earth but the passing of a pleasant and conventional moment. Many of his aides both at Port Arthur and later we knew well, but never, so far as we could learn from them, did Nogi, under fatigue or distress of any kind, utter a single lament as to the portion of suffering that the siege entailed upon him. He looked on himself as a mere instrument. He was as impersonal with respect to his own misery, worries and anxieties as he was with respect to the lives of his men, when his better judgment deemed their sacrifice necessary.

Perhaps deep down in that subtle and mysterious nature inherited from centuries of Samurai ancestors, he rejoiced at his own great burdens and sorrow, as an offset to the suffering that his orders brought to others. Though he drove his troops to the limits both of courage and of endurance, yet he used himself likewise, and none could see his face and not believe that throughout the siege he bore, locked within his bosom, more real misery than did the soldiers who fell beneath the Russian

bullets, or languished miserably in the hospitals of Manchuria, far from the peace and quiet of their simple Japanese homes.

CHAPTER IV

WITH the failure of the August assaults on the sullen heights of the Russian stronghold, came disillusionment as to the method of attack which must prevail if Port Arthur were to be taken from the Muscovites who sat stolid and determined behind their hills, crowned with masonry and concrete, and bristling with latest inventions of man for the destruction of his species. Where dash and human courage and sacrifice had failed, there remained the skill of the engineer, and the patient, plodding endurance of the private soldier, who forthwith abandoned the sword and bayonet for the less spectacular but ultimately more potent weapons, the pick and shovel. The quarry, as it were, had "gone to earth," and it was for the hunter to dig him out. And so, almost with the

same enthusiasm with which in August they had advanced over the shell-swept slopes, the soldiers settled down to mole their devious ways up under the Russian forts. The storming parties were not abandoned, but under the new programme the distances to be traversed in the assault were reduced to the minimum. Trenches would be run well up under the point to be attacked, and when but a few hundred yards remained to be covered, the Japanese would swarm out of their protected trenches and, under cover of artillery fire, sweep the Russians from the position. When they came to the more difficult places where forts of steel and concrete construction blocked their pathway, they drilled tunnels beneath the works, exploded mines, and assaulted through the breaches.

But it is not my intention to discuss the hundred details, each a pitched battle in itself, which made up the remainder of the siege. Scarcely a day elapsed that, on some point or another of the investment, where the miners had driven up within striking range of fort, trench or redoubt,

there was not a sharp bit of fighting. Some days it would be but a battalion engaged, sometimes a regiment or brigade would be called in, and every month or so there would be a general movement forward, when the whole intrenching army would be engaged in a general movement. The losses each month were mounting higher and higher, but to offset them the Japanese could trace on their maps an advance of their lines that inch by inch, like some great malignant growth, was eating with its tendrils and fibres into the living tissue of the Russian stronghold.

And with every important advance of the line of trenches, and with each outlying position eaten away, came also a forward movement of the Japanese big guns. Month by month the fire and accuracy of these great engines became more and more deadly. With every advance position taken by the Japanese, better points of observation were obtained where the human range-finders of the heavy artillery, lying on their bellies or crouching in shallow trenches, could see just where the shells, fired from

guns two and three miles distant, were doing their deadly execution. And ever with the advance crept the field-wire. The position, which one hour was hidden by the smoke of bursting shells and strewn with the dead and dying, was the next a Japanese telephone station. Indeed, the stretcher bearers carrying off the wounded would meet the telegraph corps crawling forward, unwinding behind them that vital nerve of the armies' brain, the field telephone.

As soon as the connections were completed, the man who a moment before was crouching in the mud and dirt of some blood-stained ditch, with the dead of the afternoon fight still grouped about him in the fantastic postures in which shell and ball had left them, would be speaking quietly into the portable telephone to the commander of some giant battery miles away. And thus each shell that was fired, was checked as it sped to its destination. Though the men who fired the great mortars or naval howitzers were separated from their targets by two lines of hills, yet by the patient checking of

the man in the advance trenches, they were able slowly, surely, inch by inch, to perfect their sighting until great shells, the explosions of which dug holes large enough for the foundations of small houses, were dropping through the very decks of the warships lying in the harbour four miles away.

And with each new observation station the harassed fleet was obliged to shift its anchorage. Day by day and week by week, the points of safety in the harbour grew fewer, until finally the last place where the ships were hidden from the prying eyes of the range-finders had been reached. For the moment the Japanese were balked. From the many points they then occupied, there was not one from which they could look into this last nook of refuge, where lay the great grey hulks of the Russian fleet. Just at this time there came to us, fresh from Japan, a brand-new division, the Seventh. Thus far in the war they had seen no action. At home in Japan they had waited month after month for the hour that was to send

them to the front to share in the glory and deeds of valour of their brothers who had gone out in other divisions. And they came to us, some fifteen to twenty thousand strong, clean-cut, eager and full of mettle. Marching up from Dalny with their brand-new rifles wrapped in yellow muslin and their faces shining with the spirit of patriotism and almost fanatic eagerness for sacrifice they moved into the trenches toward the Japanese right.

It was just at this time that the Russian fleet took refuge in the last corner of the harbour where there was escape from the shells that with the monotony of an avenging fate had been tracking them from spot to spot within the port. At a council of war held at Nogi's headquarters, the consensus of opinion was that there should be another general assault. For several hours they debated it, these hardened, mud-stained generals, who had been living with their troops in bomb-proofs and in the trenches. Nogi listened long and patiently to all. But his mind was thinking ever of the Russian fleet, that potent menace,

while it was afloat, to the greater strategy of the whole Japanese campaign. With the Vladivostok fleet still effective, and with rumours of the Baltic fleet coming out in the spring, the remnant of the Port Arthur fleet was a vital consideration to the Japanese, as much so perhaps as the town itself.

When the rest had finished talking, Nogi is said to have remarked quietly, "Gentlemen, there is but one point from which we can look into the refuge of the Russian fleet. That point is from the summit of 203 Metre Hill. From there we can see the fleet, with our telescopes, and in two days destroy it. The position is a hard one to carry. It will cost us dearly. But as a point of observation it is worth a division. We have our new Seventh, and we will throw that against this hill." And then in his quiet, impersonal way he outlined the general plan for the assault, and named the day for the undertaking, and without a word his officers went to their respective positions to carry out the details of the preparations which had been entrusted to them.

This was the decision of Nogi.

Who is there that can tell what it cost him personally to override the advice of his officers?

Who can describe the anguish at his heart as in placid, impersonal tones he gave those orders?

Why?

Because there in the front trenches occupied by the Seventh Division, serving as a subaltern of infantry, was his only surviving son. His lot would be to move among the first, when the order of advance should be whispered softly along the line. Many and many such assaults before this had Nogi ordered, and on many and many a morning after had he read the list of names that represented the price of parapets scaled and forts subdued. Well did he realize what it meant to scale this all but perpendicular hill of 680 feet, the summit of which was swept by three great Russian forts.

A harder nut to crack did not exist on the Russian line.

Yet he gave the orders as quietly as he would arrange with his orderly for his

horse on the morrow. And what was the result of it all? What could it be? Almost before the Japanese had commenced the desperate fighting for that tragic knoll, young Nogi, the last of the race of which the old General himself had sprung, lay dead within a few short yards of the trench from which the assault was launched. It is not necessary to go into the details of the fight. Many days it lasted; probably no bitterer, wickeder contest ever raged between men. Again and again the assaulting columns advanced, and again and again they were dislodged. Acres of dead each day remained to tell the tale of the Japanese intent to scale the heights and get their "line of vision" to the already doomed fleet. Day after day the halo of bursting shells marked out the hill where raged the battle. At last even the stubborn Russians retired, and the day was won. The cost? No one knows save the Japanese. Some say 10,000, some say 20,000. Nogi had said it was worth a division, and there is little doubt that it cost all of that dreadful toll. What it

cost Nogi himself was a broken heart, though I could not learn from his aides that he ever alluded to his son's death after he first received the news.

A week later the Russian fleet was lying at the bottom of the harbour, and the doom of Port Arthur was sealed, though it held on still. December dragged out to its appointed end, and on January 1 Stoessel surrendered.

And when Port Arthur lay prostrate at his feet with thousands of prisoners and tons of spoils, Nogi was the man in all the world that held fixed the public eye. Every civilized nation paid him the homage of its admiration. Papers printed his picture and "stories" on his life. The German Emperor sent him a cable of congratulations and honoured him with a decoration. His own sovereign gave him the greatest recognition that had been accorded to any man in the war up to that time. Japan blazed with his name. He was a national hero, a demigod. Telegrams were showered upon him in his little headquarters in the house of mud.

And how did he receive all this? Was he pleased with this exalted fulfilment of a soldier's ambition? Did he share in the turbulent rejoicings of his men? The answer is best told in the words of one of his aides, who said to me : " When Port Arthur had fallen, and while all of us of the staff were rejoicing, we missed the General, who had withdrawn from us. I found him in his house in the dim light of his lamp. He was seated alone, with his face in his hands. On his cheeks were tears. When he saw me he said, " This is no occasion for rejoicing. It has cost us both too dearly."

CHAPTER V

NOTHING could have been more inopportune for the fortunes of the Russians than the fall of Port Arthur and the release of Nogi and his army of veterans. From the point of view of nearly ten years after, it may well be described, this achievement of Nogi's, as the definite turning-point in the war, the moment that produced the cause which rendered Moukden possible for the Japanese. And it might have been otherwise had Stoessel been of the same mould as the leader who day and night for those many months had been directing the assault against him.

The Russian commander, long sick of the defence, and never heart and soul in it at best, capitulated, giving out the excuse that he was at the end of his resources and could resist no longer. This plea was

generally accepted, and for a few brief months he too basked in the sunshine of the world's plaudits as one who had endured to the uttermost, and had succumbed only when he was no longer able to continue the resistance. But with the fall of the supposed impoverished and exhausted Port Arthur came another side to the story, a side indeed which resulted later in the trying of Stoessel and in the imposition on him by a court-martial of the sentence of death, subsequently commuted to life imprisonment. For on the counting of the effectives and the taking of the inventory by the Japanese of the captured supplies, both of food and ammunition, it seemed that there were still, in spite of the scandalous waste, many rounds of ammunition and food which, with economy, might have lasted for weeks.

I remember months later in Northern Manchuria dining with a certain Japanese General who was in the position to know, and pressing him for his opinion as to how long the fortress might have held out. He hesitated for a long time, for

it was not considered good form among the Japanese to criticize the enemy. Finally, after considerable pressing, he said, "I cannot say how long the Russians might have held out. They made a very brave defence, and we admire them greatly. But had Port Arthur been occupied by the Japanese—ah, then—yes, I think it would have been different. Two months at least would we have had food and ammunition—but I do not of course criticize the Russians." Two months! It might well have made a great difference in the issue of the war! How? Simply enough. Nogi moved almost immediately from Port Arthur to the North, where Oyama lay with his four great armies facing Kuropatkin's divisions. The great Moukden battle was not launched till Nogi came, and then for nearly one solid month was the issue engaged.

It was Nogi and his Third Army from Port Arthur that turned the flank and made the retreat of the Russians necessary; it was Nogi and his men who made the victory possible. Scarcely was the battle

ended, when the spring was upon Manchuria, with the frost coming out of the ground and the roads heavy. Had Stoessel held out two months, or even one month longer, the great battle would have been delayed till June, perhaps ; or had it been fought earlier, in the spring muds, the history of the flanking movement might have been quite different. For it is one thing to move troops, artillery, munitions and transports over frozen ground, and quite another to perform the same feat when the earth is an ooze of greasy mud. A battle fought in June would have seen the Russian army stronger by perhaps 100,000 men or may be even more. What, then, might have been the issue ? It is useless, however, to speculate now, and besides, it is outside the province of this sketch.

No sooner were the formalities of surrender over and the prisoners sent to Japan, than the men of the Third Army were free at last to join their brothers in the North. Nogi and his men reached the rear of Oyama's united armies about the

middle of February, and almost at once the battle of Moukden began. The conflict which started then was in reality a thousand different battles and skirmishes, and continued until nearly the middle of March, when the last fragment of the shattered Russian divisions limped wearily through the Tie Pass.

I was not personally with the army at Moukden, having late in the previous fall been invalided back to Japan, and my authority for the comments on Moukden is Frederick McCormick, perhaps the ablest of the correspondents who were in the Orient during the war. He represented the Associated Press. Directly after the war I met him in Japan, and from him learned a little of what the Russians thought of Nogi and his men. The Russians knew, according to McCormick, that Nogi was loose somewhere, but not for days after the battle did they know just where he was to be expected. From the time the battle commenced it was Nogi who was the terror of the whole army from flank to flank. All knew he had joined Oyama.

None knew where he would strike. To the privates of the Siberian steppes and the peasants drafted from the valleys of the Volga and the far-off Neva, this man Nogi was the incarnation of the demon of war.

His men were pictured by camp-fires at night as devils of blood and fire who would stop at nothing, who eagerly sought death in their efforts to reach a hand-to-hand encounter with their foes. The stories of the attacks at Port Arthur, though difficult to exaggerate, were enlarged upon until the whole Russian army pictured Nogi and his men as superhuman creatures steeped in blood, and deep dyed in hatred, soldiers for whom death held no terrors, and who, once launched on an assault, would keep attacking until the last man was killed. Again and again the narrative of 203 Metre Hill, where the Japanese sacrificed 15,000 men for the possession of an observation station, was told in Russian ranks, where one might also hear the story how the Japanese infantry in one assault were exhausted, and with ammunition spent

refused to retreat, and remained and threw stones at their enemies until the last man was killed.

It is safe to say that no warrior and no army were ever more feared than were this same Nogi and his men at Moukden. From the time the battle started, the one great dread in every quarter of the Russian host was that it would be Nogi himself who would be thrown against them. A dozen false rumours heralded in a dozen quarters the fabled approach of this superdemon, and a dozen times the rumours were dispelled as idle gossip. At last the blow fell, and then like wildfire the truth flashed through the entire Russian army that the famous Third Army of the Japanese was already well around their right, and striking at full speed for their line of retreat. And when at last the attack came, there was no doubt of where and how Nogi was striking. At the first point of contact on the Russian flank, the veterans of Port Arthur, who esteemed fighting in the open as nothing after the grisly heights of the beleaguered fortress, appeared suddenly, and

as it seems unknown to the Russians, well in the rear and outside the flank, and in their first assault crumpled up the Russian defence like paper. With shouts, which with characteristic Japanese subtlety they had been taught in the Russian language, they advanced, screaming between their Banzais, "We are Nogi's men from Port Arthur!" And from the moment this fear-inspiring cry sounded on the Russian flank, the battle was lost. The spirit of hope abandoned spread like fire, and soon the whole great army was in retreat. Not the retreat of panic, perhaps, but the stubborn retirement of men paralyzed with the certainty that victory was impossible.

When the flanking movement reached its apex near Tieling, Nogi, in the West, could view the line of the Russian retreat flowing through the neck of the bottle, which led to the North. While his artillery was playing shrapnel and death on the main road, from the West, Kuroki was thundering at the same target with his guns from the East. A single division, or perhaps less, of mounted infantry, with

either Nogi or Kuroki, could have broken the line of retreat, and the war might have ended on the spot, with the capture of the Russian army. But the supreme had been achieved when both these devoted armies had reached the Tieling Pass. The men, had they been fresh, would have broken through the line and cut off the retreat. But they had been marching short-rationed for days, and they lacked the final ounce of vigour to "turn the trick," and though with their last strength they made a few feeble attempts to do so, it proved impossible.

After the war one of the medical men high in authority told me that the soldiers of Nogi's army, on the last days of the flanking movement, had moved so much faster than their food supplies that many of them had had no food to speak of for several days ; to prove his statement he affirmed that hundreds of soldiers who were shot through the intestines, made rapid recoveries for the reason that their intestines were so destitute of food that in many cases they were flat and dry, and the punctures healed

quickly without the danger of poisoning which usually follows abdominal wounds.

At Moukden Nogi, though successful in the eyes of the world, felt but meagre satisfaction. Again had his legions been decimated, and despite his victory, his satisfaction was dampened by the realization that the sacrifice of his men had not been fully compensated by complete success.

CHAPTER VI

WHEN the smoke of Moukden cleared away and the dead were buried, there came upon both armies a long period of inaction, which, barring a few minor engagements, lasted until the coming of peace the following fall. When the Russians had pulled themselves together after their rout, and hideous losses, they spread out their cohorts in a long line across Manchuria, with their centre on the railroad a little North of the Tie Pass. For a month or so the two armies were in a state of readjustment, forming new general lines of opposition. The Japanese, with Moukden as Oyama's grand headquarters, threw out their five great armies in an extended belt reaching from the frontier of old Mongolia on the extreme West, to the Korean hills on the right, a total distance

of nearly 180 miles. Nogi, with the First, Seventh and Ninth divisions, all of which came with him from Port Arthur, was given the post of honour on the left flank of the Japanese. During the latter part of March and early April he pushed on North and West, driving before him the last scattered fringe of the Russian resistance.

Toward the last of April he occupied, as his headquarters, the little Chinese town of Fakumen, while he pushed his Seventh Division, of Port Arthur fame, thirty miles beyond to the North and West, and his Ninth, of the Port Arthur Centre, to the East of that, while the First took up its position to the rear and between the two. All forthwith began to entrench, and throw up gun positions, to render the line thus occupied impervious to a Russian attempt to regain the ground lost in March. By the first of May the general position, which was maintained until the end of the war, was occupied, and the armies settled down to await the passing of the spring, and the ensuing rainy season with its mud and heavy roads. This, at least, was the

reason given out for the long delay, and it seemed an adequate one, but I am personally of the opinion that there was another and an even more potent cause for the long halt.

There seems little doubt that the Japanese had shot their bolt at Moukden. I do not mean by that that they could have gone no farther ; but many reasons led those of us who were with the army to believe that beyond Moukden their plans had not been laid out in the detail with which they were accustomed to act. The staff had, without doubt, foreseen and carefully planned the whole strategy of the campaign up to Moukden, and here they had expected that the war would end, possibly with the capture or utter demoralization of Kuropatkin. They had defeated him badly, certainly, but a month later they were facing the same army in a new position, and they were confronting the problem of another battle even bigger than Moukden itself. As far as troops, supplies and munitions were concerned, the Japanese might have gone forward

again as soon as the roads were passable, but there is little doubt that maps and carefully-calculated programmes for a farther advance were wanting. Without such minute prearrangements, they never moved. It seems certain that while the world was waiting all that summer for news from the "front" the Japanese themselves were working night and day preparing maps, and working out details for another battle, with the same care and perfection with which they had planned the early stages of the war. But more of that anon.

It was at this time that Richard Barry, then of *Collier's Weekly*, and myself rejoined the Third Army. Neither of us had been present at Moukden, and we had not seen Nogi since the withering days at Port Arthur. There all had been tense and the whole staff and army, though outwardly courteous and polite, had been careworn, soiled and desperate ; and, though the mask that their race so subtly draws over the Japanese character, hid from us an outward aspect of men pressed to the last extreme of human anxiety and mental

misery, yet we felt the potent fire of despair and thwarted ambitions which smouldered beneath each placid face that greeted us always quietly, casually and politely.

But here in the North it was quite different. The terrific tension had been eased for the time being, and for the first time since the war started, we came to know a little the men of the army themselves. At Port Arthur there had been nearly a score of war correspondents gathered from the four corners of the globe. Each had been merely an impersonal unit to the staff to whom they had been consigned from the War Office in Japan. Each had certain credentials and each was shipped out to the "front" and treated with the scrupulous attention which the rules and regulations issued by the War Office had laid down for the handling of war correspondents. Richard Barry and Frederick Villiers, the war artist of the *Illustrated London News*, veteran of a score of campaigns, were always, even in that strenuous day, favourites of Nogi. The rest, I think, had no place in his thoughts at all.

But in the North it was far different. In the whole vast Japanese army there were, out of almost a hundred correspondents who had been in Tokio in the early stages of hostilities, not above a dozen left. The score that had been with Nogi had been reduced to three, one man besides Barry and myself, and he the correspondent of the London *Times*, who had only just joined the Third Army. Perhaps Nogi associated Barry and me with the dreadful days in the South ; but, in any case, from the time we landed in Fakumen after a forty-mile ride from the nearest station at Tieling, he treated us with the intimacy of old friends, and during the months that followed I believe we came to know the real man as well perhaps as any outsiders did during the war.

Fakumen was a native Manchurian town of perhaps 50,000 population, packed within four walls, a very maze of streets, narrow alleys and by-paths wandering about in hopeless, planless confusion. Away to the West was the dim and distant line of the Khin Ghan foothills and mountains, beyond

which lay the great Gobi Desert. To our East was a range of hills through a pass in which, a mere defile, lay the road to Tieling and Moukden, over which we had come. Between the Pass and the distant faintly-outlined mountains, was a rich and fertile valley, and in the centre of this lay Fakumen, quaint, primitive, and oddly picturesque in its Oriental setting. Indeed the only touches to link it with the Twentieth Century were the incongruous manifestations of a modern army, signs which greeted us unexpectedly at every turn. Here, near an old Chinese temple that had stood aloof for centuries shrouded in the halo of the mystic Oriental atmosphere, one would stumble on a Japanese battery in repose. The guns, with their long sleek lines and cruel aspect, leered cynically at us from the very shadows of the portals within which surly priests were burning incense and mumbling their quaint services.

The walls of every town and village were loop-holed for rifle and artillery fire, and we could scarcely wander a foot from our doorway without stumbling over Japan-

ese soldiers and lines of transport. Enter almost any compound in the town and one would be confronted with neatly-stacked pyramids of the modern rifles of the Japanese. The Northern wall of the town was the line of old Mongolia, and in its centre was a huge stone gate, built centuries before. Again and again have I stood in the shadow of its great overhanging lintel, and watched the ebb and flow of civilizations separated in all but time itself by a thousand years. One moment would see the passing of a string of Chinese coolies, long poles on shoulders, from which swayed baskets of vegetables and produce. The next instant a trim figure on horseback would clear a path through the stolid, impassive Chinamen, and a long line of pontoon boats on trucks, for the bridge trains up ahead, would rattle and rumble through the gate. Then would come a Chinese cart with its primitive wooden wheels, all just as it might have been when Columbus discovered America, to be followed perhaps by the Japanese telegraph corps, with their coils of copper wire on reels, and wagons loaded with

bamboo poles and glass insulators. One could never step into the street without being struck with these strange contrasts.

And here in this town, on one of the little side streets among the winding alleys, in a compound built of stone and mud, lived Nogi himself, as simply, quietly and without ostentation as one of his own orderlies might have done. A sentry at the gate, a few officers loitering about the courtyard, and a handful of orderlies and servants moving quietly about their tasks, is all that distinguishes the General's headquarters from a dozen other similar dwellings in the town. We see the General occasionally in the streets, when he always salutes us in a kindly fashion with a little friendly smile ; but in his headquarters themselves, and in his little workroom with its rough Chinese bed in one corner, we are received as cordially as we are in the quarters of the military attachés or of our brother correspondent of the *London Times*. We are made at home, given tea, cakes and Japanese sweetmeats with the simplicity that is characteristic of Japanese hospitality.

Nogi has changed greatly since we last saw him. His hair is now streaked with grey ; tragedy and pathos are written deep in the lines of his face. Only when he smiles, and when the little twinkle shines in his deep black eyes, does his face light up. But the moment that repose returns to his features, the shadow of Port Arthur—sons gone for ever, friends killed in scores—seems to cast its “ melancholy mantle o’er his brow.” The General here is much more punctilious in his dress. He is never brilliant in his attire, but now he is always clad with absolute perfection as to detail. His long military boots are of patent leather and invariably resplendent in their polish. The simple insignia of his rank are always freshly burnished, and his long brown military overcoat, with its three gold stars and three stripes on the sleeve, always looks the same.

CHAPTER VII

ONE afternoon in May, 1905, Barry and I dropped in on the General for a cup of tea and what the members of his staff, in the occasional little formal notes in which we were asked to call, were pleased to refer to as "chit-chats." This particular day the General was curled up in a great arm-chair ; his feet freed of the great high military boots, and tucked away under him. He received us pleasantly and intimately, without even the formality of getting up. For nearly three-quarters of an hour we sipped tea, smoked cigarettes and exchanged pleasantries about the life in Fakumen and the commonplaces of our daily doings, while we waited for the advance. Never had the General seemed more casual and, as it seemed to us, so free from the responsibilities of the great

army of which he was the absolute dictator. Then his face grew thoughtful, and he suddenly volunteered, with a deprecating little smile and a gesture half of regret and half of apology, "You must excuse me now, for I am somewhat busy this afternoon, for the Russians under Mischenko are making a raid to cut off our communications." How absolutely typical of the Japanese ! To chat idly and without concern for nearly an hour about mere pleasantries, and then, almost as an afterthought, to tell us the only bit of news that six weeks had brought forth during the quiet of the army's doings. We withdrew promptly, needless to say, without being able to elicit any further details as to what was going on. Nogi would answer all our questions with little smiles and bows and polite evasions, just as though it were all a slight joke between us.

Looking back on it now, I think that this very day must have brought to Nogi one of the acutest annoyances of all that summer in Manchuria ; for, as we soon learned, our whole town, including the

Third Army base, Nogi, and the entire staff, came within an ace of being gobbled up by the Russians, who failed only through their own dense stupidity or want of enterprise. As mentioned before, we were on the extreme Japanese left, and forty miles away from us was General Mischenko and a division of Cossack cavalry, which formed the extreme Russian right. With some eight or ten thousand of his cavalry and a battery or two of light artillery, this enterprising commander had completely circled the Japanese left end, and the first intimation the headquarters received of the raid at all was when a flying column of the Russians dropped in on the main road between Nogi and his advance divisions and wiped out a field hospital and knocked about some of our transports. Simultaneously some two thousand Russians appeared on the hills within a few miles of Fakumen.

Nogi, though he had probably 100,000 men under his command, was so far in the rear of the line of the army, that he had, all told, in his headquarters village,

hardly a full company of infantry. But the Russians, with characteristic ignorance or for lack of initiative, never even made an attempt to enter the town, though they must have outnumbered our little garrison by at least ten to one. Their sources of information were nearly always defective, and it is very probable that they did not realize that the captor of Port Arthur was within their grasp. At no place anywhere near us was there any large body of troops, as our forces were widely scattered in villages for miles in every direction. The batteries of artillery were in a similar way widely spread about, there being never more than one or two batteries in one place. These were all connected with headquarters by telephone. The horses were backed into small shelters made of matting, with faces out, much as fire-department horses are kept in American cities. Their harness was hanging on nearby hooks, and it was the work of but a few minutes to hitch up when orders came, and to pull out with an entire battery.

And this very afternoon, after we had

left Nogi with the news of the Mischenko raid humming in our heads, we had an opportunity to witness a sample of Japanese mobilization. It was as though some one in a city had stepped to the nearest corner and sent in a fire-alarm from one of our red fire-boxes. The alarm had been sent out from Nogi's headquarters as soon as the unexpected enemy had shown up, that is to say, a little past noon. The first response came while we were discussing the possibilities of the situation after we had left Nogi. And it was one to cheer the heart of even the most blasé, or the dullest among us. The first battery to reach us had come, perhaps, six miles, and it came pounding in through the great Mongolian Gate, with the horses at a gallop, their necks thrust to their uttermost through their collars, as, six to a team, they flew over the road with the guns bounding and jumping behind, the men clinging for dear life to their seats, and the whole, from lead horse to gun-muzzle, coated in mud and dirt. As they entered Fakumen, they slowed down to

a trot, and with rattle of chains and clink of sabre, came to a halt in the centre of the town. The horses were lathered with sweat, and their blood-red nostrils were dilated, as with heads hung low they gasped for breath after their long dash. Ten minutes later a second battery jangled in from the East, fully as exhausted as the first. Perhaps thirty minutes after this a squadron of cavalry, blown and sweating, came racing in over the main Kharbin road from the North, and by nightfall the streets were filled with bivouacked soldiers of the three branches of the service.

Fakumen, that at noon might have fallen an easy prey to a single squadron of Cossack cavalry, would not have been menaced by a division at six that night.

And while all this had been brewing, we had been sitting quietly with Nogi, drinking tea !

CHAPTER VIII

HUMILITY in victory is as much of a test of the fineness of a man's character, as is the ability to bear defeat and personal losses in the hour of disappointment, when an ambitious plan of victory has gone astray. Nogi had won our everlasting admiration at Port Arthur by his acceptance of all the misery and grief that was his portion there. In the North we had an opportunity to see him in another rôle. It was the day after Togo and his redoubtable fleet had so overwhelmingly crushed the Russian Baltic fleet in the battle of the Sea of Japan. For two days we had received hints from the staff of what was going on, and we were not surprised on the second day, when an aide called at our quarters, and in his halting English informed us of the details of the

sweeping naval victory and stated that it was General Nogi's wish that we should come to his headquarters at seven that evening and drink toasts in honour of the Japanese Nelson, who, by his last achievement, had utterly destroyed all hopes of a Russian naval supremacy. So it was that we gathered, Barry, the London *Times* man, and myself, in the long Chinese room where Nogi and his staff met for their councils.

When we arrived, some fifty or more officers of the staff and commanders of nearby brigades and regiments were already assembled. Down the centre was a long table spread with a great white cloth. There were no chairs, but every two feet distant on the board was placed one of the tin drinking-cups that the Japanese used in the field. The room hummed with the talk and laughter of the officers, all exuberant at the great news from the sea. Suddenly a hush fell on the gathering, and without, we heard that familiar sound of sabre dragging and spur-chains ringing on stone

flagging. The door opened and in came the Chief, his great boots, with their tops flapping about his knees, and his military coat thrown open, disclosing the simple uniform of the Japanese general. A few paces behind him followed his personal staff. As the General passed, every officer stood at attention, and every eye followed him with respectful and reverential gaze as he walked slowly to the end of the long room and took his place at the head of the table.

It is not a picture that any of us who were there will soon forget. That long white room, with the quiet, masterful figure, cup in hand, standing silently and detached at the head of the board. At his right is old Ichinohe, his chief-of-staff, formerly commander of the Sixth Brigade, who not so many months ago led in person the final successful assault on the famous P redoubt of the East Keekwan fort at Port Arthur, one of the impossible positions on the whole line. Near by, in a somewhat shabby uniform, is the Colonel of Engineers, whose scores of inventions and

devices were such an important factor in the operations against the great stronghold in the South. On every hand, crowd, eager-faced, the generals and officers who have shared the Commander's confidence and who fought with him, from ditch to ditch, during those long months of heart-burn and nerve-fraying misery on the tip of the Liaotung peninsula.

Here, also, stands the good old General of the Commissariat, whose ceaseless labours have made comfort possible to the soldiers, even on the firing line. A little farther down the table is the quiet, impassive face of the Inspector-General of the medical staff, to whose untiring energy and skill thousands of recovering wounded in Japan owe their lives to this day. Next him is the Commander of the Artillery, recently made a lieutenant-general for his Port Arthur record. Next, with the yellow facings on his uniform, is the General commanding the cavalry of the western army, who has ridden in forty miles from the extreme front in order to be present to-day. His uniform is crumpled

and dusty with the long hours in the saddle, but his face is beaming. Below him, in still a different uniform, is the engineer officer, who is to-day in charge of the line of defensive trenches, which are being constructed in the far front of our army. Every branch of the service in Manchuria is represented. Khaki-clad officers of infantry, with gold aigrettes showing their staff rank, officers of the artillery with facings of red, soldiers of the commissariat, red cross, transport line, telegraph and bridge trains, all, in fact, that go to make for the success and victory of an army, are gathered here to do honour to their own Chief, and through him to Togo, the Emperor and Japan itself. On the left of the General the correspondents are given room. Near us stands Yamaguchi, the linguist of the Third Army, who speaks a dozen languages with a fluency that is depressing to those who barely master one.

At last all are assembled. The room is crowded to the doors with men in uniform. A little hum of conversation has been

resumed, as Nogi speaks in an undertone to us of the Press. But suddenly a silence falls as the Commander raises his cup filled with champagne. Still holding it aloft, he speaks rapidly in Japanese, and as he finishes he gives it a little jerk upward as he cries the single word that we have understood, "Banzai." Then, with a roar like a salvo of field artillery, comes the answering "Banzai" from every man within the walls. Again and again the cry rings out, that deep-chested war-note that must ever thrill the blood of one who has heard it at the front, drifting across the field of battle to the deep chorus of the roar of guns. The rafters ring again and again. The air fairly shakes with the tumult close confined. Nogi looks on with a little quizzical smile on his face. At last his smile fades away and a look half stern, half sad takes its place. He raises his right hand. Instantly silence falls on the room. Every man leans forward to catch his General's words. What he said was translated to us, and was something as follows: "It is right that we should drink to our fleet and

to our brave sailors and Togo our Admiral. Through the celestial virtues of his Imperial Majesty they have won a great victory. But we must always remember that our enemy have had great misfortune for their portion, and as we drink to our victory, let us not forget our enemy in the hour of his distress. We must recognize in them worthy foes who have met death in a cause into which they have been unjustly forced. Let us then drink with reverence to our own heroes and with sympathetic respect to our fallen foes."

This is the typical Nogi. Then he turns to us, all lightness and laughter again, and calling on each of us for a speech, he stands smilingly by as our remarks are translated to him. Fraser of the *Times* fills the General's cup again as he proposes a toast from England. Nogi is delighted, and when the Englishman has finished, he laughingly goes down the table hunting for a bottle that is not yet drained and comes back to us, laughing like a child, with one, half-empty, which, with an air of the greatest gravity, he

distributes equally among us. At last he shakes hands with us and goes out into the compound. After a few minutes of talk with the officers, we too bid them good-night, and walk out into the gathering night. It is after eight, and the twilight is just fading into darkness as we emerge.

As we walk out of the enclosure I notice a man in high boots and a long brown overcoat standing beneath the shadow of a shed, leaning on a roughly-hewn manger, as he strokes the neck and nose of a big bay horse. He pulls the beautiful head of the charger down on his breast, and with his free hand presses beneath the expectant pink mouth a Japanese sweetmeat. The man turns from out the shadow, and the last light falls upon his serene face. It is Nogi : the man who spent 100,000 lives at Port Arthur.

CHAPTER IX

N OGI, like all other great men, had a weak "spot." His "heel of Achilles," I suppose, it might be called. In our innumerable conversations with him as the summer drew on, I could never learn, by so much as a word, that he took any great pride in either Port Arthur or the Moukden campaign. Of self-adulation or even consciousness that he had done great things there never was the slightest indication. He was a soldier born, bred and trained. A long line of Samurai ancestors had for centuries past been warring and leading men to bloodshed, and victory or defeat, as the case might be. To Nogi, I dare say it seemed the normal thing for men to do their duty and live up to those curious, half-defined ideals which the ancient Japanese so cherished. Had he

failed, I suppose he would have perished of chagrin. That he had succeeded, he accepted as a matter of course. It was his profession to fight and to win, and that he had so practised it was but part of the day's work. The personal standpoint, I think, held little or no interest for him. As for the adulation and almost hero-worship that Japan lavished on him, it seemed to make no dent, and was accepted indifferently and no doubt with just a shade of annoyance, as something superfluous. He was merely in his own eyes a tool for the accomplishment of certain ends, and he cared no more to be idolized by others than he did to magnify himself—which was not at all. We could talk with him of his campaigns, compare him with Cæsar, Napoleon, Grant or any of the other great names of history without eliciting from him anything but a little annoyance and a "You Americans are great flatterers," and then he would quickly change the subject.

But Barry, for whom, as I have mentioned, Nogi cherished a greater regard

than for the rest of us, discovered the one place where the old General was open to the seductive use of flattery. It was his poetry! For Nogi once in a while indulged in the gentle art of verse. Personally I never was a connoisseur of Japanese poetry. Barry went in a bit for that sort of thing, and when, late in the summer, he discovered that Nogi composed stanzas during his leisure hours, he at once approached Yamaguchi, the interpreter, for translations. In due time the Japanese symbols, over which Nogi had laboured, were turned into English of a sort and placed in Barry's hands. He was enormously impressed with the ideas, and the gentle shades of expression in which the old General had indulged, and for a week was in an ecstasy of enthusiasm over their translation into English in suitable metres.

Again and again he called on Nogi to discuss this agreeable theme. I used to go along too, but was as *non grata* to both, I think, as a chaperon at a lover's meeting. Nogi would sit in his chair, his feet

tucked away under him, while Barry would discuss the merits of his verse. Here, indeed, every shot told, and he whom we had found invulnerable to every other appeal to his vanity, was as eager as a child to hear his poetry extolled. I well remember how he sat with rapt expression and eyes half closed as Barry, who had made a translation (and a good one, too), explained to him the difficulty he had had in getting the proper metre in which to carry the ideas. It was a vexed problem, as Barry said, whether the metres of Shakespeare or those of Swinburne were the more worthy to carry the ideas of the General. Barry was sincere in the matter, for he never ceased praising this side of Nogi's character, and all the while he was discussing the warrior's poetry, the General was as pleased as Punch. I do not know how many interviews they had about it, but certainly a great many.

Our own little house was across the street from the larger compound where Nogi lived, and so, as the summer advanced

we used more and more frequently to run over in the evenings for the little "chit-chats" with the General. The natural result was that we gradually began to know more and more of the man, as opposed to the mere soldier of Port Arthur. He took more interest in our welfare than ever before, and his first question after the greetings were over related to how we were faring. Did we have fresh meat? No? Then he would instruct the commissariat to send us some in the morning. Was our coffee holding out? If not, he had some very fine, just received from Japan, and as likely as not we would have an orderly bringing us a can or two of it within an hour after we returned home.

Then, too, he began to inquire more closely about our individual selves. How old were our parents? Were they both living, and where? How did they like to have us so far away? and a thousand other personal and intimate questions, which revealed the simple interest of a parent, himself bereft of sons. Occa-

sionally we would draw the conversation around to the great problem that lay about us in Manchuria and tactfully press him for hints as to when we were to move forward again. But always with greater tact he led us away from the topic which he rarely discussed. Once or twice he did drop a few words which gave us a hint as to what his opinions were as to the Russians and some of their leaders. "The General says," the interpreter would repeat to us, "that he is very sorry for the Russians. They are good people, these soldiers, and have a hard time. He regrets it very much." And once, when we were discussing the removal of Kuropatkin and the succession of General Linevitch to the supreme command, Nogi said: "The Japanese are very thankful to the Czar of Russia for his kindness to our army in taking General Kuropatkin back to Europe. He is a very fine soldier, and we are very happy to see him go away from the war. No one could have done better in his place," and then he hurriedly led us off to another subject less vital to the war itself.

During June of that summer we had some little fighting on our West front, and once or twice we could hear the distant thunder of field-guns in action. I remember going with Barry to see Nogi, to beg him to let us go to the "front" and see what was doing. We explained to him how dull it was for us and how very little news there was to cable home. He listened with the greatest attention and apparent interest to our troubles and then replied: "What has been going forward in our front is of very little importance, and would not make very much news for you, my friends, and might cause me great embarrassment." Then he looked at us quietly for a while before he continued through the interpreter. "You see you are out here as guests of Japan and as guests of our War Office, and so of myself. If I were to allow you to go up to our advance lines there would be a very large chance of your being killed or wounded by the Russians. This would be very distressing to me, because I should be severely censured by the war department in per-

mitting the Russians thus to kill our guests." He paused for a few moments, and then went on again: "You see there is nothing of much importance going on just now in Manchuria and every little event is much magnified. If you were killed now, it would make big items in your papers and every one would blame General Nogi. I beg of you to wait until we have a big battle, and then you will see how many privileges of going to and fro I will give you. During the big battle there will be much news, and if you are killed it will not matter; in the confusion of the battle it will not be noticed."

We saw his point of view and did not again press the question.

With us that summer Nogi always seemed cheerful and rather optimistic, but as his aides told us, when he was alone he was very unhappy and mourned the loss of his sons bitterly. When the hot weather came, towards the last of June, the old General made his orderlies build a kind of ladder to the roof of his one-storied house, and up to this roof they hoisted with ropes

an aged arm-chair with rockers. And here, night after night, just at twilight, the General used to climb and seat himself. From our front stoop in the compound opposite we could see him, though we were ourselves invisible, being in the shadow. Night after night, Barry and I used to sit on the stone steps in front of the bean-mill, in which we lived, and watch the silent figure of Nogi sitting in the moonlight on his roof. He would take off his big boots, and with the inevitable sword in his lap, he would rock softly to and fro as he gazed away and away to the distant line of the Khin Ghan foothills. We two would sit quietly smoking our pipes and conversing in whispers, until the silent old figure would slowly get out of his chair and, step by step, climb down the ladder and disappear from our view. Even then we realized that, in spite of all his show of gaiety and humour, he was a sad and broken-hearted man.

CHAPTER X

INASMUCH as Barry and I had received so many courtesies from Nogi and the staff, we determined to reciprocate as best we could, and so, after due care and consideration, we drafted a formal invitation to the General and certain members of his staff, requesting the honour of their presence at a dinner to be given by us and by Major Joseph E. Kuhn, the military attaché of the United States Army, and naming the date as the evening of July Fourth. The very next day an aide waited on us, and after many salutes and clicking of heels, presented the following note, which I have before me as I write :

HEADQUARTERS THIRD
IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY,
JULY 2ND, 1905.

*To the Americans attached to
the Third Army.*

Gentlemen :—

As July Fourth is your National Holiday, and the occasion of great rejoicing in your country, and as there now exists a feeling of great friendship and cordiality between America and Japan, I wish to express the esteem that my country holds toward yours, and that I, as commander of the Third Army, hold toward you personally as the only representatives here of America, in presenting to you a case of champagne, which is sent herewith, that you may drink to your independence in Japan's name on that auspicious occasion.

Cordially yours,

GENERAL BARON M. NOGI.

And sure enough, no sooner had we finished reading the note, than an orderly, at a signal from the aide, stood forward with a case of champagne which, as we were afterwards informed, was part of the stock that Kuropatkin had left in his cellars at Moukden, when he had climbed into his private car during the last days of the battle and started for the North. Living

as we were so far from a base, it was quite a little problem to get up a dinner, but by sending our Japanese servant to New-chang, we managed to collect quite a variety both of viands and beverages for the occasion.

Nogi took great interest in our preparations, and sent General Ichinohe, his chief-of-staff, to confer with us and offer what assistance lay within his power. Ichinohe threw himself into our preparations with the enthusiasm with which he had led his brigade on the P redoubt at Port Arthur, with the result that we were at once offered the services of the Osaka Military band with its forty-odd pieces to play during our dinner, which we gratefully accepted. Next came, ever polite, an officer from the commissariat and placed at our disposal cooks, waiters and food supplies from his department. What worried Ichinohe most was where we could give a dinner, for our "bean-mill" was not only somewhat primitive but exceedingly limited in space. We ourselves slept in a small square room, while the "mill-room" was commandeered

for our kitchen. But the Chief-of-Staff helped us to solve this problem by ordering in a detachment of soldiers to build an enclosure in our compound, which should shut out from the gaze of the diners the regiment of pigs, chickens, donkeys and assorted inhabitants that usually stood about our door and looked into our windows while we ate.

The day of our dinner, more soldiers were sent some ten miles away to cut greens, so that in the centre of the mud and slime of our compound we had a veritable bower arranged. Outside, on chairs, also borrowed, sat the band in full regalia, and in due course came Nogi himself and his staff, also in their best bibs and tuckers. Major Kuhn acted as toastmaster and Nogi was down for the first response to the toast, "Mikado, King and President." Lieutenant-General Burnet, a fine sample of an old officer who had spent a lifetime in India and was in Manchuria as attaché for England, replied to "England and Japan," and when his speech was over, the band played "God

Save the King." We sat down to table at seven o'clock, and it was long after midnight before our distinguished guest rose to depart.

This occasion, on the whole, was one of the pleasantest features of the summer. As I watched Nogi that evening, with his head freshly shaven and his beard trimmed to a mere stubble, it seemed impossible to realize that we were in the midst of a great and bitter war, and that the man who sat at the head of the table and playfully joked with us and his officers was one of the leading actors therein. It seemed incredible that that smiling face, apparently divested of care or responsibility, was the same that we used to see at Port Arthur, hard, desperate and haggard. Even more impossible did it seem that the quiet, gentle voice which engaged so easily in jest and badinage with us, was the same that in crisp, cold sentences, from which all traces of humanity or sentiment had gone, had issued orders destined to hurl tens of thousands to their doom.

In a way the whole evening seemed incongruous. Here we were in our bower of greens, with the band giving us Sousa, the latest ragtime and our various National tunes. All cares were cast to the winds, and the mere thought of war seemed as out of place as jig-time music at a funeral. Yet around us in silent, cynical might two great armies lay poised for a life-and-death struggle. More than a million men, trained for the sole purpose of human destruction, were lying on their arms, ready at a word from Moukden or Petersburg to lock horns in a new conflict, greater and even more destructive than any that had gone before. And when the call for the advance should come, these very men who talked and laughed so lightly with us to-night, would again become the cogs in that smooth-running and precise engine of war that we had seen before in operation. And if the great advance with its inevitable battle did come, how many of these guests now assembled with us could we muster at a dinner two months hence? There was poor Yamao-

aka, our companion and friend at Port Arthur, who was caught in a shrapnel-burst at Moukden, and fell with a ball through his head, a shot that cut both optic nerves. To-night as we laugh and joke together, he lies in his home in far-off Japan, blind for life. But such is war, and for the most part we confined our thoughts to the present, and when the band as a last number played "Auld Lang Syne," and Nogi and his staff had gone, we agreed that our evening had been a great success.

CHAPTER XI

THE Japanese at home as well as abroad are a great people for celebrations. They have a holiday for the girls, a holiday for the boys, and innumerable gala days in which important historical events are commemorated. In fact they make up for their lack of Sundays by taking a day off at frequent intervals to rejoice over something or other. If it is an important date, so much the better. If unimportant—no matter, they celebrate with just as much enthusiasm. And so it was this summer in Manchuria, while we waited expectantly to hear what would be the outcome of the peace negotiations in America, which now formed the main topic of all our gossip. Already the First Army, under Kuroki, had held a great jubilee away off on our right, in

order suitably to honour the first anniversary of the battle of the Yalu. The Second Army, that lay next us, made an occasion of May 26th, when the first really costly land battle of the war was fought and so many of the Japanese perished under the fire of Russian volleys and machine guns on the bloody slopes of Nan-Shan.

And now at last came our turn to hold a day of rejoicing and of festivities. Up to the same time a year ago nothing of surpassing interest or importance had happened in Nogi's army. Our men felt, however, that they too must hold some sort of a holiday, and so, after mature deliberation, they picked the date when a year before they captured the first line of hills that formed the defence of Port Arthur. It was June 30, 1904, when the grand old Ninth division of the Japanese Army occupied and made permanent its position on the first great hill that lay between the Japanese advance and the main line of the Russian defences. And so it was that a day was set apart that we might rejoice fittingly on the first anniversary

of that bloody event. But as the rainy season was not yet over in Manchuria, when the day came around, the army's enthusiasm was postponed until August 1.

The main event was the wrestling, which the Japanese seem to enjoy more than any other form of field sport. Weeks before the festival the best wrestlers from each division had been picked, and some hundreds of these had come into our headquarters to wrestle off the preliminary bouts. Thus, by the afternoon of the grand day, there were left only the picked men of an army of nearly a hundred thousand soldiers, all of whom were more or less well trained in the art. In one of the big compounds the place for the entertainment was prepared. A square, of an acre or more, was roofed over with matting. In the centre a ring, or more properly speaking, a "square" of soft earth, about twenty by twenty feet, was raised. On one side were seats for the officers. There were seated members of the staff and the invited guests, while on every other side crowded the soldiers, who had been per-

mitted to come in for the sports. Several thousand squatted about in their worn khaki suits, to watch the games they so admired.

At 2.30 in the afternoon all were seated save the commander himself. On the front bench were the generals, including Lieutenant-General Burnet of the British Army and Major-General Pertey Pasha of the Turkish General Staff. At the appointed time there was a rustle at the outskirts of the crowd and with a single movement the entire audience rose, every hand at the salute, as the General himself came down the narrow lane that was cleared for him and took his seat between the British and Turkish attachés. Then began the wrestling. To a Westerner it was not as exciting as a prize-fight, or even a wrestling-match, as we see them. All that is required among these wrestlers is that the opponent be thrown or pushed out of the ring. The result is that the bouts seldom last over a minute and often but a few seconds. The two contestants, stripped but for a loin-cloth, enter the

square, salute the "grandstand," and then face each other. When the umpire gives the word, with the agility of cats, they close upon each other. For a moment there is a deadlock, as the lithe bodies sway to and fro, and then one or the other is thrown. Occasionally two evenly-matched men wrestle for over a minute before the fall comes. Sometimes one of the antagonists will, at the first rush, pick up his man, and carry him bodily outside of the square and drop him without the ropes. For an hour or more on this day we watched the wrestling.

Then there was a variation of the programme. It was a dance—a remarkable dance. A dozen soldiers entered the ring dressed only in aprons, improvised from what they could pick up around the camp. One with a blanket, decorated with paper flowers, another with a bit of carpet studded with little hand mirrors. These dancers joined hands and then commenced a series of evolutions, which were graceful but not exciting. The final matches were over before six o'clock, and the victorious athletes

were awarded their prizes amid the cheers of the audience. All through the performance the General watched his soldiers with the keenness and tenderness that one notes in the eyes of a father as he watches his sons on the football field or the baseball diamond. Nogi's old eyes would light up with glee at a clever bit of work, and he would laugh like a child when one of the wrestlers would suddenly turn defeat into victory. Once, after a hard-fought bout and three drawn "falls," when both men had fallen together, he stopped the games, and directed the umpire, so even were the matches, to give prizes to both contestants.

At six o'clock dinner was served to all the officers that had come from the different divisions of the army. On an elevation just outside the wall of the old Chinese town, a large quadrangle had been levelled off and covered over with matting. Three great tables down the centre and a single table across the top were set out with cold viands and Japanese delicacies. The whole was trimmed with myriads of little Japan-

ese paper blossoms made by the soldiers in their leisure hours. Outside, behind a screen, the Third Army band played. At the upper table General Nogi, in the centre, entertained the Generals who had come in from their commands, the foreign attachés, and the military correspondents of the Army.

What a scene it was! The sun was just setting in the West, and its last crimson rays fell aslant the hills, all about us, while the more distant mountains stood out sharply against the sky. At our feet was a little valley, through which burst an uproarious stream, swollen far beyond its usual meagre size by the incessant down-pour of the past week. Hundreds of Chinese in their blue blouses stood beyond the sacred enclosure and eyed with open-mouthed wonder this scene of hilarity. Five hundred officers, all in their finest uniforms, crowded about the tables and drank one another's health, consumed mountains of cold meat, and rapidly disposed of gallons of Japanese beer and saki. There were Russian bon-bons, too, that were

wrapped in bits of paper, with the factory-mark of far-off Odessa printed thereon. All through the Army it was the same that summer. Both at work and at play the Russians provided for their enterprising little enemies. At Dalny we had seen an entire Russian town, with Russian houses and Russian piers, all at the disposal of the invaders from the Island Empire, while the Japanese at Port Arthur were living almost exclusively on supplies taken from the enemy. At the front the same was true. From these candies to the great Russian transport carts, with the Russian characters scrawled on their sides, and the great siege guns, we saw everywhere the uses which the Japanese were making of what the Muscovites had abandoned in their retreat.

After Nogi had drunk the health of his foreign guests, he passed down the long line of tables, everywhere stopping to speak to his officers with a pleasant word and a smile for each. As we watched the old man among his children, our minds reverted to another scene, where but a

short twelve months ago were present many of these same men. No bright uniforms then, nor scene of celebration and merriment, with a smiling general and passing around of Russian sweetmeats and Japanese saki. Then the great hills of Port Arthur loomed for the first time, forbidding and gloomy, on the vision of these very men. The General whom we see now wreathed in smiles and radiating good humour, then first confronted the great task to which he had been assigned. It is with a suppressed sigh that we think of the many officers and friends that but a year ago were our hosts and cordial entertainers, but who lie to-day in Manchurian graves, pierced by Russian bullets or torn by shrapnel.

And thus did we of the Third Army celebrate our great occasion. The early morning of the next day saw the roads, in all directions, crowded with the officers riding back to their divisions and outposts. The holiday was over, and our minds reverted to the problem that was ever with us. Were we to have more of

grim and relentless war, or was a treaty to be signed at Portsmouth that would bring peace to the armies in distant Manchuria ?

CHAPTER XII

WITH the advance of August the indications that peace would be the outcome of the Portsmouth "chit-chats" became more and more promising. We at the front knew nothing, for during the latter part of the negotiations our mails were delayed or held up, and the papers from Japan came rarely to us and the rest of the Army, and finally stopped altogether. The Army was in the pink of condition and eager for another battle, and I dare say the powers that were running the war did not consider it desirable that their morale should be affected by the anticipated possibility of an early peace. About the middle of August the peace signs seemed so strong, that Barry and I had half a mind to leave the Army and return to Japan, just as nearly all the few remain-

ing correspondents who had been at the front that summer had already done. We decided to go down to Moukden and see if we could there get any idea as to how the negotiations were proceeding in America.

When we had left the railroad the previous May, the country had been bare and brown, with scarcely a spear of green to enliven the sombreness of it all. But three months had passed, and when we rode into Tieling in August, the sun and the rain had done their work upon the face of the land and turned it into a very paradise. Acres upon acres of the tall kowliang, or millet, bent and swayed beneath the soft breezes of summer, like the waves of the ocean; poppies, with their brilliant red blossoms, onions and vegetables were planted everywhere in acres, wherever little patches of timber dotting the plain showed where the Chinese villages nestled in the shade. The millet reached ten and fifteen feet in height, and in many places where we took short cuts through the narrow trails that wound

through the grain, it seemed as though we rode through miniature forests, which murmured above us, scattering upon our clothes the dust of the fine pollen of the plants.

As we approached the railroad, the signs of activity became more and more apparent, and the indications of peace seemed to us to be more remote. The country had been active three months before, but now it was humming with the industry of a great beehive. Trains were coming up from the South at the rate of one each hour, and every one was of the maximum length and loaded to the guards with the raw material of war. The railroad yards at Tieling were filled with long lines of cars, around which buzzed and hummed the cohorts of the Japanese coolie soldiers. Car after car we saw, covered with the dull, leaden grey tarpaulins, which protected the countless tiers of boxes containing ammunition for the small arms, while strings of box-cars, loaded with food and red cross supplies, were being emptied of their contents every hour. Train after

train came puffing in. First an artillery train, with flat cars in the front, loaded with the guns, fresh from Japan, and in the rear the box-cars with the men and horses of the organization. "Truly," we thought, as we sat in our train, headed for Moukden and the grand headquarters, "President Roosevelt and the peace negotiators have failed at Portsmouth," for in eighteen months' association, off and on, with the army, we had seen no such signs of preparations for a great battle.

On the platform of one of the stations on our way South we met a Japanese officer who, after the first commonplaces of greeting, asked us what we thought was ahead of us, "Peace or War?" Of course we knew nothing and could only ask him the like. What did he think? "Ah," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders, "soldiers do not think. They can only obey orders. We only know that both armies are preparing for the greatest struggle of the war. We are moving more troops than ever before. Thousands are coming to us daily,

and we hear that there are thousands more waiting for ships in the Inland Sea towns. Of course we soldiers prefer to fight, for that is our profession, but there may be peace," and he sighed deeply.

We spent three days in Moukden as the guests of Oyama, Kodama and the officers of the general staff, but we got no information there, only shrugs of the shoulders and "Ah, we do not know, but we strongly urge that you return to the front very quickly. You may miss something most interesting." Kodama himself, the chief-of-staff, who at the early stages of the war had used his entire influence to keep the correspondents in the rear, was especially urgent. "We do not wish that you leave us," he said again and again. "In the early months of the war we have made great mistakes in the treatment of the journalists. We now recognize that they are very useful in a war. We cannot tell if there be peace or not, but we think it would be very unwise if you go away." Oyama, with many "Ohs" and "Ahs"

and polite little bows and pleasant little smiles, was of the same mind.

All this, of course, did not lead us to believe that peace was imminent, and so we returned at once to our Fakumen headquarters. For a week we sat quietly in our bean-mill and watched the activity that surged and beat about us. The days of mere drills were passed. No longer did we see Nogi sitting quietly in his compound or nursing his sword in his lap as of yore, when he spent his evenings alone on the roof of his house, watching the mountains in the moonlight. No more were we invited to teas, dinners and "chitchats." Now when we passed his compound, we saw only strings of horses being walked up and down by orderlies, while hardly a day passed that some general of division or brigade did not visit the commander from the extreme front, where we were told the soldiery were working like demons on trenches and advanced gun positions.

Every day we saw Nogi, usually on horseback, with his staff. Always he saluted

us politely, but now it was the Nogi of Port Arthur that we saw again, and not the Commander that had laughed and joked with us at our Fourth of July dinner. That subtle change from an army at rest to one in the travail of preparation for a great struggle was felt in every town and village that we visited. A few days after our return from Moukden we began, away off on our western flank, to get new troops from the rear. First there came the Eleventh Division, fully 25,000 strong, counting its reserves. We never knew it was on its way until we saw its General and his staff (whom we had known at Port Arthur), ride into Fakumen one day. The next and the next and the next day, for a week, we sat on the roadside beyond Fakumen, and while our horses nibbled contentedly at the grass, we watched the soldiers of the Eleventh pouring North, regiment after regiment. Now, too, we began to get more artillery, and battery after battery jingled through our little town on its way to the front, while every road was traceable, for miles, by the cloud of fine

dust that rose above the marching of many feet and the rolling of artillery and transport wheels.

By the last of August it was clear to all in Fakumen that peace negotiations had failed, for did we not each day see increasing preparations for war? At last came the news that the Fifteenth Division, a new one fresh from Japan, was on its way to join us. That settled it in our minds, and Barry and I at once decided that we would make a final trip along the front and get the lay of the land before the storm broke. So with just our saddle horses and one servant, we rode forward to our left front, where lay the Seventh Division of 203 Metre Hill fame. If we had had any doubts before about the coming of a big action, they vanished here. The first night we sat at a banquet, given for us by General Osaka, its commander. Some thirty officers from his command sat down to the board, and I do not recall ever having attended a similar dinner, where the guests were more carried away with enthusiasm and the lust of battle. Eyes

flashed and voices rang, as toast after toast was tossed off to the coming combat. Again and again we were invited to come to the Seventh and share with them the great conflict. It was long after dark when we left the table for our quarters, and through the dimness of the night-shadows we met, even at that late hour, a regiment of cavalry (the Nineteenth I think it was) that had ridden forty miles that day and was just going into camp for the night. Barry and I talked long after we were under our blankets, and worked out our plans for the next weeks, which we figured would be spent entirely in the saddle.

The next morning early we pushed still farther to the front and to the West, where we took lunch with the commander of the cavalry. Here, to our surprise, we learned that nearly the entire cavalry of the whole army in Manchuria was spread out. Almost 15,000, so we heard, were lying on the extreme left flank ready for the great turning movement, it seemed, Nogi was then planning. Here at lunch with the

General of Cavalry was the same fever of enthusiasm that we had seen the night before. Here again were toasts drunk and invitations showered upon us to come and live with them during the battle. And here we heard it reported that already on the far, far Eastern flank, some 180 miles away, the Imperial Guards Division was advancing, and that the first shots had been fired between the outposts, or, as one young officer expressed it, "Yes, oh! already our Imperial Guards, they are making shoots at the Russian outposts." Every one seemed to feel that two days at most would see the general movement fairly under way. We had intended to stay longer at the front, but now, assured in our minds of immediate action, we decided to return to Fakumen and make our preparations for the battle.

It was about forty miles back to our headquarters, and we rode gaily through the dust, turning out every few minutes to let batteries and transport trains pass us on their way to the front. I have never before or since seen such an un-

broken string of guns, cavalry, soldiers and munitions as I saw that day we rode back to Fakumen. Our hearts fairly sang with excitement. After four months of waiting we were going into action at last. All the way back we were arguing and discussing plans for the next month. Barry wanted to go with the Ninth Division, but I leaned strongly to the Corps Artillery, since that, being well toward the base where lines of information would converge, would not move forward until the strategic point in the operations was reached. We were still debating the matter as we rode through the old gate, on the Mongolian frontier, and entered Fakumen. Tired we were, and covered with dust an eighth of an inch deep, when we pulled up in front of our bean-mill in the old familiar compound. As I threw my bridle to one of our servants, a Japanese orderly stepped out of the shadow and handed me a telegram on the Japanese charactered blanks of the Field Wire. I tore it open and read it. The date line was Tokio. It was from my agent in Japan and contained one word.

But that was enough. It simply said "Peace." I handed it to Barry and he read it over too.

We looked at each other in dumb amazement.

The war was over.

CHAPTER XIII

THUS it came about on the very eve of what would have proved to be the most stupendous battle in history, that peace fell upon Manchuria in the month of September, 1905. And, strange as it may seem, it fell almost as a blow upon the entire Japanese army. Every man and every officer whom I talked with, was eager for what all looked forward to as a conflict that would finally wipe out hopes of a Russian supremacy in the Far East for half a century to come. No one seemed to count the cost of either lives or money. All were only too anxious to make the sacrifice, be the cost never so great. In view of the vast preparations which we had seen and which even that moment were still at full tide, we could not at first believe the news that had come to us. But late

that night the correspondent of the *London Times* came around to see us, and in his hand he held a cable from London ordering him home from the "front." We sought out the staff, and with glum and sour faces they admitted that the news was only too true. We pleaded with them to tell us the terms of peace. In their gloomy visages we read deep and bitter disappointment, though of the details we could learn nothing. One young officer volunteered, with an oath and a flush of rage, the startling comment that he hoped Komura would be assassinated on his return to Japan. This, from one who had never before expressed a definite opinion before us, was very significant.

And then the next day it began to leak out just what the terms of peace were. No indemnity and only half of Saghalien Island! These were the particular points that the Japanese could not swallow. I remember telling the terms of peace to a Japanese cavalry sergeant whom I met on the road. He had lived in San Francisco before the war, and spoke English fluently.

When I explained to him as much as I knew of the result of the negotiations, he stood like one in a stupor for nearly a minute. Then he snatched his hat from his head and dashed it to the ground and burst into a torrent of invectives in Japanese. At last he said in English : " If what you say is true, we have been betrayed. Our brave soldiers have been sold out. But we here at the ' front ' will never permit it. We will recognize no such treaty. We will fight on, and we will beat the Russians, peace or no peace."

As for Nogi himself he was bitterly disappointed. He withdrew to his house and saw no one, the staff giving out the report that the General had been taken suddenly ill. We pressed for further information, but were curtly informed that he could not be seen ; that he had a severe disturbance of the eyes. Perhaps he had for all I can say to the contrary, but the word that passed among us was that Nogi, who had been able to stand, without turning a hair, the sacrifices and distress that the war had entailed, had not been able to

swallow the disappointment of so much spent and so little gained in the treaty of peace. I think there was not a man in the army who dreamed of the possibility of no indemnity or of giving up a foot of the newly-occupied Saghalien Island ! We were bent on leaving for Japan the very next day, but a sad aide waited on us with a note from headquarters advising us that though Nogi himself could not be present, yet he wished us to partake of a farewell banquet to be given by his chief-of-staff in our honour before we departed for our homes.

The dinner was held in due time, and Ichinohe presided. It was very complete and very fine indeed. Many kinds of foods and more kinds of drinks were served. The Osaka band, just outside the banquet-room, played its liveliest airs. Various members of the staff made stiff little speeches, and Ichinohe himself said a few halting words of farewell. But it was far, far different from the dinner we had sat down to a week before, at the Seventh Division headquarters. No suppressed excitement here ; no eager invitations to be present

at the coming action. The battle had been fought—at Portsmouth—and as the Japanese felt, hopelessly lost, while they who were eager to pour out their very hearts' blood were obliged to sit in bitter acceptance and reconcile themselves as best they might to what had befallen them. They sat eating and drinking stolidly, barely exchanging words with us or with one another.

The dinner was almost over and we were eating fruit and drinking liqueurs, trying to keep up a pretence of conversation with our sad-eyed hosts, when the door was suddenly thrown open. For a second no one looked up, and then in an instant every man in the room was on his feet, and standing at rigid attention. In the door stood Nogi, blinking a little at the light, and with an expression of sadness on his face I shall never forget. He was without his boots and without his sword. His feet were thrust into Japanese slippers and his black military coat was open at the throat. He had on no collar, and the first two buttons of his white shirt were

open, disclosing the sinewy muscles of his brown neck. He did not smile at all, but walked slowly around to the head of the table where we sat, and shook us by the hands. Then he spoke sharply in Japanese to an orderly, who placed a goblet of champagne in his hand. Once more he turned to us, and with a gentle look in his eyes, those sad, sad eyes, he said something as follows: "I have not been well, and so it seemed that I could not be at this dinner. But as I sat alone in my quarters it seemed right that I should step in and say a few words to you men of the Press before you leave us. You gentlemen (referring to Barry, Ricarlton, who had just joined us, and myself) were with my army at Port Arthur. That none of us will forget. So we cannot let you go without a word of farewell ; yet will we not say farewell itself. Let our friendship ever be like the stars that fade in the dawn, though lost to sight, yet none the less present. We see you not and you will not see us, perhaps, yet will we each know that the other somewhere is living and thinking of us." Then he raised

his glass, and silently we all drank. Then he turned to his staff and called, with a little of his old fire, "banzai," and the men answered as ever. Three times that old shout rang, and then once more the General shook us by the hands and, as quietly as he had come, walked to the door. He turned for a moment and stood looking us over, and then, with a little smile, he brought his hand to a formal salute, turned abruptly, and was gone.

And this was the last glimpse we had of dear old Nogi.

We had intended starting on the long ride to Tieling at daylight, but, just as we were mounting, an orderly asked us to call at headquarters at seven o'clock. We rode around there on our way out of the town and in the compound found old Ichinohe and half a dozen of the staff awaiting us on horseback. The Chief-of-Staff saluted us formally and then, through an interpreter, he said: "We will accompany you part way on your journey toward the East." And so in the crisp, frosty air of the early

morning we rode along the winding street of old Fakumen toward the Eastern gate.

The day was like a September day in North Dakota, or in the valley of the Danube. There had been a sharp frost, and the rays of the sun, still copper red, were just coming up behind the range of hills. Every blade of grass stood out sharply in the early sunlight, with the frost rapidly turning to drops that shone like diamonds. As we swung out over the old bridge, the Osaka band, standing just beyond the gate and hidden from our view until we were upon it, struck up Sousa's "The Stars and the Stripes," with all the brass and the ardour that its forty constituent parts could produce. I think I never heard it played better. For a mile we rode down the road until we reached the outskirts of the town. Ichinohe stopped, and the little cavalcade came to a halt. "The Japanese," he said, "are loath to say good-bye to their friends. So we will not say farewell. I will sit here upon my horse, with my staff about me. You will ride to the bend in the road. When you reach it, you will turn and look

at me, and I will wave my hands to you, and you will wave your hands to us, and that shall be our last farewell."

So we rode off down the roads, our hearts heavy and our eyes not quite dry, for we had come to love those old soldiers with whom we had lived for so many months. It was fully a mile to the point where the Fakumen road to Moukden led into the little defile, which wound its way Eastward. We turned, when we reached it, as we had been bidden, and there, barely visible in the distance, stood the group of horsemen. We waved our hands, and in return there came from the figure on the great black horse a white flutter. It was Ichinohe waving his handkerchief.

And thus, after many months, we took our leave of the Third Imperial Japanese Army.

CHAPTER XIV

OF Nogi, after the war, I shall say little. He returned to Japan to receive all the honours which his Imperial Master and an appreciative nation could confer upon him. Of these it is not necessary to speak ; suffice it to say that higher tribute no man received after the war, not even excepting Oyama himself. When the Emperor of the Island Empire died, Nogi was conspicuous among the mourners. But none of the thousands who watched that immobile face at the dozen ceremonies which marked the occasion, dreamed of what was going on behind that mask, or of the dreadful intent concealed beneath the grave and quiet face. It had been planned that when the body of the Mikado left Tokio on the special train for its burial place, the fact should be announced by the booming of

artillery. Nogi withdrew to his home, and with the first report, he quietly cut his throat, and the spirit of the last of a long line of the Samurai of his race slipped away to join that of his departed Master. To us, far off in England and America, the deed seems a dreadful one, but to those who knew Nogi and understood a little of his ideals and of his simple worship of his Emperor, the act seems not strange, but almost natural.

There can be little doubt that his own desire for life went out when his two sons were sacrificed on the altar of the nation at Nan-Shan and at Port Arthur. That Nogi himself cared anything for the personal honours that were showered upon him, none who ever knew him could for a moment believe. His whole life was simply the personification of the duties which his ideals set before him. From them, either in war or peace, he never wavered. After the war it seemed his lot to perform certain high functions in the Army and in the State; he performed them patiently and faithfully. He owed his allegiance to his

Imperial Master, and when that Master's death came, there was no longer any obligation to live, and so, without a tremor, Nogi cut his throat and died. Perhaps, deep in his heart, he felt that by his death he might kindle anew in Japan the idealism of the older days, sullied a little by contact with the Western civilizations. In any event, his life stands out as a unique example of a man who did not flinch from any hardship or from any danger. He accepted all without complaint and valued life only that it might serve the object in which all his loyalty and duty seemed centred. To Nogi, the Emperor was the personification of Japan itself, and when he finally gave his life for the Emperor, it was also for Japan. His work seemed done, and he yearned for the peace and quiet long deserved and long overdue.

That such a man with such ideals could live in this day and generation surprises those of us who are accustomed to the life of the Western world. We see great men spring up, reach high office and the goals of ambition, but usually the idea of self

lurks somewhere within the shadow. We see great patriotism too, but who in the last generations can show a record of devotion, suppression of personality and an idealism that can equal that of the old Japanese Samurai? We read of such men in the ancient days of Grecian grandeur. But they lived in a far different environment.

Here we have a character whose later life was passed amidst the turmoil of a great modern industrial nation. Yet in and through it all he was the same old Spartan. He could use, as his tools, the best that civilization had to give, but neither national glory nor personal ambition could turn his iron heart from the cherished principles of ancient chivalry implanted by his father. In his heart, deep, deep beneath the surface, the flame of the idealism of ancient Japan burned with never a flicker. Consistent, faithful, true, he had one thought: his duty to his Emperor and to Japan. And consistent, faithful and true he died, leaving a lesson that should not fall on barren soil. Even we,

of the West, in the midst of our tumultuous pursuit of wealth, position and reputation, may well pause and think for a moment of just what such a man as Nogi represented. To Japan he is the vindication of a National ideal. To the rest of the world it should be an inspiration to know that men still live who can cast off the mantle of their personality, and concentrate their lives upon an attempt to realize a benefit outside themselves, a good that affects a whole nation, and, when this is achieved, can willingly, gladly and simply die.

The West cannot perhaps sympathize with the spirit that prompts a man to commit suicide, yet we must judge the great Japanese general from the point of view of his religion and his traditions, and not from that of our own standards. So judged he must be accorded a unique position, not as the captor of Port Arthur, nor as the hero of Moukden, but as a simple man who lived only for the performance of duty, and for the realization of ideals inherited from centuries long since passed.

Nogi was such a man.

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